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MUSIC CONTAINED IN THE PREVIOUS NUMBERS OF THE "MUSICAL TIMES."

- No. 1. In these delightful pleasant groves.....Parcell
2. Hear my prayer, O Lord.....Winter
3. Soon as I careless stray'dFesta
Hail! all hail! thou merry month of May .Weber
4. Thou art gone to the grave.....Beethoven
Hear what God, the LordV. Novello
5. Hail! smiling morn.....Spofforth
6. Let all men praise the LordMendelssohn
Forgive, blest shade.....Dr. Calcott
7. Four rounds, for three voices
8. Call to remembranceFarrant
9. Pleasures of InnocenceFrom the German
Amidst the myrtlesBattishill
10. Teach me, O LordRogers
11. Here in cool grotLord Mornington
12. My God, look upon meJohn Reynolds
13. Oh, Nanny, wilt thou gang with me?
14. } When winds breathe soft.....Webbe
15. }
16. Soldiers, brave and gallant beGastoldi
17. All people that on earthTallis.
18. Sweet honey-sucking bees (1st Part).....Wilbye
19. Vital Spark, harmonised byNovello
20. } Sweet honey-sucking bees (2nd Part)Wilbye
21. } Now pray we for our countryEliza Flower
22. Now the bright morning starGreville
23. Thine, O Lord, is the greatness.....Kent
24. Just like Love.....Davy & Novello

All communications of the progress of Singing Class Teaching, addressed to the Editor of the Musical Times, 69, Dean Street, Soho, or 24, Poultry, will be interesting.

A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE PRESENT STATE OF MUSIC,

MORE PARTICULARLY IN GERMANY.

By a GERMAN.

WE live in an age when analysis is applied to the explanation of every thing; and every

phenomenon of intellectual life suggests the question, what is its share in the general development of the human mind. Before examining the result of the investigations to which music may be submitted, it must be premised that this art is divided into two parts, each entirely distinct from the other; viz. *composition*, which may be called the poetry of sound; and *execution*, or the organ more or less intelligent of this poetry.

To speak on the present state of musical art, we must revert to the classical epoch, and the men of genius who prepared the way for that state; when three bright, leading stars appear,—Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven. By them the German soul and thoughts have been expressed in music, with an energy, a freedom, and a power, hitherto entirely unknown. Their works exhibit a grand and well-supported development, and a marked tendency to make music independent by the perfection of its elements.

With Haydn, and especially in his *first* works, *form* seems to govern science. His musical thought adhering closely to the established rules, nevertheless animated them with a new spirit, and sometimes he metamorphoses them. It may be said to be a sportiveness of form, but it is the sport of an innocent and calm spirit, that yields to its impulses, which are grace and serenity. For the rest, magnificence and dignity characterize the genius of Haydn. In his compositions, the plaintive is unaffected, the melancholy mild; and neither the one nor the other is manifested with violence.

Mozart combined *form* and *science*. The structure of his compositions is generally symmetrical; his means are, *contrasts* and *repetition*; but melody, harmony, and rhythm, form in them a sublime whole. His music expresses the deepest melancholy as well as the most exalted joy; and we may say of him, as Laertes said to Ophelia:—

"Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself,
She turns to favour and to prettiness."

Besides all these qualities, what caused Mozart to be the very centre of the classical musical period, is the happy union of song with instrumental

music, in the true German sense. 'Don Juan,' the chef-d'œuvre of his creations, is, on that account, the sublimest opera that Germany or any other nation possesses.

In Beethoven, *science* gains the ascendancy over *form*. His thoughts reach the last limits of the power of sounds. From the height upon which he placed himself, he contemplated nature in its charms, in its struggles, in its horrors. Freeing himself from all the shackles of symmetry, (his genius disdained *forms*) he followed without hesitation the new road which he had traced. Combining the sprightliness and the naiveté of Haydn with the profound melancholy and the richness of harmony of Mozart, Beethoven seized the spirit of all instruments, and the result of his efforts is artistical independence—the true sovereignty of instrumental music. But *song* could not bend to this violent action, and these poetical exigencies; and therefore it remained to a considerable extent a stranger to Beethoven.

Around these three geniuses arose other masters, who, animated and instructed by their example, carried instrumental music still nearer to perfection.

After Haydn, whom they took as a model, came the two brothers Romberg. One of them, Andreas, particularly excelling in musical expression, yet failing in depth and power of thought. Spohr preserved in his symphony the exterior form of Mozart, creating at the same time to himself an original style, which, by the agitation of its harmony, has an elegiac and passionate character. Ries, without any pronounced style, employed soothing melodies with considerable talent. Kalliwooda, who, in his first symphonies, seemed to approach to Spohr, assumed afterwards a richness of harmony, and fantastical painting, altogether his own. Finally, Onslow combined with a lively, animated, but, at the same time, regulated, imagination, the talent of *technicality*, with naturalness of *idea*.

(To be continued.)

BRIEF CHRONICLE OF THE LAST MONTH.

HULLAH TESTIMONIAL FUND.—A third choral meeting took place on April 1st, at Exeter Hall, in aid of the above, on which occasion, among other things, a *Motet*, Ave Maria, by Mendelssohn, with semichorus and accompaniments for clarionets, bassoons, and double bass, was performed for the first time in this country. Mr. Edward May was conductor, as usual, and a better could not be desired. We were glad to see the hall crowded.

CECILIAN SOCIETY.—The annual performance of Handel's "Israel in Egypt" was given by this society on the 9th April.

CLIFTON.—The larger of the Victoria Assembly Rooms was well filled on the 7th April with the friends

of Mr. H. Cooper, the *beneficier*, to enjoy the intellectual treat prepared for them. The works selected for performance entire were the "Last Judgment," by Spohr, and the Symphonia-cantata, "The Hymn of Praise," by Mendelssohn. The large band and chorus were composed wholly of professors and amateurs resident in Bristol and Bath, assisted by Miss Rainforth, Miss Dolby, and Mr. Alfred Novello, from London. The result was highly creditable to the musical skill of the performers and the refinement of a large and attentive audience.

CHORAL HARMONISTS.—We were sorry to find at the last meeting of this society, on the 13th April, that they had gone from their established rule of commencing with a mass, with orchestral accompaniments, and that this innovation was made to give place to a very weak composition by Neukomm. The Dramatic and Musical Review, speaking of the work at this meeting, says, "The first part consisted of Neukomm's cantata, 'Easter Morning,'—a production appropriate enough in its subject for the present period, but rarely reaching the grandeur and impressiveness of the higher order of sacred music. The melodies are generally pleasing, and their treatment often approaches to excellence, but never reaches it. The crowning fault of this cantata, however, is the inappropriateness of style which pervades portions of the music." The second part made amends, consisting of a most judicious and admirably-executed selection from Mozart's "Clemenza di Tito."

THE MIDDLE RHINE FESTIVAL.—This annual festival will take place this year at Aix-la-Chapelle, on the 29th April and three following days. These delightful musical gatherings are held alternately at Dusseldorf, Cologne, and Aix-la-Chapelle. The present year will be the 23rd meeting, and the festival altogether on an unusually large scale. It is expected that the king and queen of Prussia will honour the meeting with their presence.

DRAGONETTI.—This great double bass player departed this life on the 16th April, sincerely regretted by a large circle of friends and admirers. The goodness of heart which distinguished his life did not desert him in his later moments, and it is said he has left some token of remembrance to most of his friends and professional brethren. He is supposed to have reached the advanced age of ninety-one. He played in public within a few months of his decease.

MANCHESTER.—The last meeting for the season of the Harmonic Society took place, in the Free Trade Hall, on the 23rd of April. The music selected was an ample portion of "Alexander's Feast," by Dryden, with Handel's music; "Haste thee, nymph," from L'Allegro; and a miscellaneous selection of choruses, songs, and madrigals.

SACRED HARMONIC SOCIETY, EXETER HALL, has produced several new works, and others which are not usually heard. On the 1st April, Handel's Joshua, which contains several choruses of great merit, besides those introduced from his other oratorios. On the 24th April, an effective cantata by Mr. Perry, the leader of the society, entitled Belshazzar's Feast, in which several choruses deserve remark. Mendelssohn's magnificent psalm, for eight choral voices (without solos) "When Israel out of Egypt came"; and, in conclusion, the Second Mass, by Haydn. The 24th April was the 150th public performance of this society, at Exeter Hall.